2002. On the recommendations of the Chief Ministers' Conference held on 22nd June 2000, an Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers was constituted to deliberate and decide on matters relating to implementation of VAT by the States/UTs.

(c) and (d) while no State has formally stated so far that it will not switch over to the Value Added Tax System, only Government of Haryana is reported to have introduced VAT with effect from 01 April, 2003.

(e) and (f) In a meeting of the Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers held on 8th April, 2003 it has reportedly been decided that 16 States (which includes Haryana) will introduce VAT with effect from 01 June, 2003.

(g) Accurate assessment of loss, if any, on account of introduction of VAT is possible only after its actual implementation by individual States.

Allocation of Kerosene to Uttaranchal

3329. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the per capita availability and consumption of kerosene oil in Uttaranchal, district-wise and panchayat-wise; and

(b) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to increase the allocation of kerosene oil to Uttaranchal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Government makes kerosene allocation to various States/Union Territories for distribution under Public Distribution System (PDS). State Governments/Union Territory Administrations undertake distribution of the product within the concerned State/Union Territory. As per the allocation approved for the year 2003-2004, per capita allocation of kerosene to the State of Uttaranchal is 11.01 Kg per annum.

Exploration of gas in Rajasthan

3330. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the districts in Rajasthan where exploration for petroleum and gas has been taken up after the discovery of petroleum and gas in Barmer district recently;

(b) whether this exploration is being done by Indian or foreign company; and

(c) the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (c) After the recent discovery of oil and gas in February, 2003 a Production Sharing Contract (PSC) was signed on 4th February, 2003 under the third round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) with the consortium of Oil India Ltd. (OIL) and Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) for an exploration block RJ-ONN-2001/1 situated in Bikaner and Ganganagar districts of the State of Rajasthan. The work programme under the PSC for this block envisages investment of about Rs. 60 crores in the first phase with commitment for reprocessing of data, acquiring 3D seismic data and drilling of exploratory wells. The exploration work will start after the grant of Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) by the State of Rajasthan.

LPG connections in Doda district

3331. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG connections provided by various agencies in Doda District of Jammu and Kashmir during the last three years;

(b) the number of consumers registered for new LPG connections during the above period; and

(c) the number of additional gas connections issued in the district alongwith the number of consumers on the waiting list, agency-wise during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have released 4,547 new LPG connections against the registrations made by the distributors in Doda District of Jammu and Kashmir during the last three years. There is no waiting list pending with any of the the distributor in Doda District and LPG connections are available on demand.